Tom Thiersch

Over the last several years, Jefferson County Public Works' Solid Waste Department has deliberately reduced the ability of residents to recycle recyclable materials.

The Department closed 60% of the drop off sites that had been available to the public for decades.

The Department moved the remaining recycling collection points to "behind the scales" so that users pay the same per pound for other solid waste, regardless of recyclability.

At the remaining collection points, containers for recyclables were designed to be an UNusable as possible, requiring users to insert items individually through narrow openings; for example, there is no way to simply empty a bagful of aluminum cans into the recycle bin.

The approach taken by Jefferson County is, simply put, harming the environment by actively discouraging recycling. Most recyclable materials here will have little chance of being recycled.

As a direct result of those changes, the amount of material being recycled in Jefferson County has decreased substantially. Jefferson County residents will see almost no benefit from "producer responsibility" -- all we will see will be higher prices because producers will simply build the costs of compliance into the price of their products.

Producers' profits will actually increase as a result of this ill-considered legislation, all at the expense of the consumer.